**Kate:** Good afternoon. This is Kate Moore for the National Park Service. Today is the 4th of January, 1994 and I’m in Warren, Ohio at the home of Steven Stocz, who came from Hungary in 1920 when he was 19 years old, almost 20 years old. Why don’t you begin by giving me your full name and date of birth please?

**Steven:** I born in 1900. I was the second. 1920 I come out in United States.

**Kate:** What is your full name?

**Steven:** Steve in American. In Europe they said Stocz Estevan.

**Kate:** How do you spell Estevan? Do you know?

**Steven:** S-T-E-V-E.

**Kate:** Do you have a middle name?

**Steven:** Paul.

**Kate:** Estevan Paul Stocz.

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Where were you born?

**Steven:** The village where I born, the state [unclear 00:01:32].

**Kate:** Do you know how to spell any of those for me? Maybe you can write them down later; we will get that later.

**Steven:** I don’t write down because I can’t spell.

**Kate:** What size town was that town you were born in?

**Steven:** [unclear 00:01:57].

**Kate:** How big was it?

**Steven:** Big village.

**Kate:** How many people?

**Steven:** Roughly about over 1,000.

**Kate:** Could you describe that town?

**Steven:** We had a beautiful big church, Rome Catholic Church; only Rome Catholic and Greek Catholic. The Greek Catholics were more than the Rome Catholics, a lot of people. A beautiful village; we never had no trouble, Greek Catholic and Rome Catholic. We used to go when we were young, like children, you’ll tell around with the Greek Catholic people too.

We used to go to Greek Catholic Church too. They had the masses different way like Rome Catholic. It’s the same primary belief in one God. I never argue about religion; I walk away.

Mid 17 year, Uncle Sam grab me. I serve 20 months in the service in Hungarian army. I was in Italy against Italy. If you people read about [unclear 00:03:56]. When they start the war off and is small, you can’t walk through without trouble.

When they open the gate I would [unclear 00:04:13] fast up on the hills. I know about that war, I can explain how the gate open up and closed. When they open that, you can go through the river [unclear 00:04:39].

**Kate:** Where is this now you’re talking about?

**Steven:** In Italy.

**Kate:** In Italy when you served in the army?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** We’ll get to that in a moment. We go back to your town; where was the town situated and what did it look like? What type of land was it? Was it mountainous?

**Steven:** No.

**Kate:** What was it like?

**Steven:** Flat. You see the mountain where I grow up far away, different state. State where I born was flat like Ohio, good ground. I was a farm boy. There [unclear 00:05:29] come out. When I come home from the war I said, “Dad, I want to go see my brother.” I come out with a young boy. We got our aunt, mom’s sister. She took care of him and I stay here and meantime the war broke out, you can’t come.

**Kate:** Which war broke out?

**Steven:** The First World War, 1914.

**Kate:** Back in that town, what was the major industry in your hometown in Hungary?

**Steven:** Farming.

**Kate:** You were a farm boy, like everyone else?

**Steven:** That’s right.

**Kate:** What was your father’s name?

**Steven:** Steve.

**Kate:** You’re named after your father?

**Steven:** That’s right.

**Kate:** What did he do for a living?

**Steven:** Farming.

**Kate:** He was a farmer too? Your grandfather, grandmother they were farmers?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Everybody was a farmer?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What did your father look like? Do you remember?

**Steven:** I’ve got a [unclear 00:06:48].

**Kate:** You’re going to tell us for the tape.

**Steven:** He’s small like I, little small and husky. He no repeat a word. You have to do this once, that’s all. You have to do it or else you’ll get punished.

**Kate:** So he was a disciplinarian?

**Steven:** Yes. He mean business and thanks God he was strict because children discipline and I have to behave.

**Kate:** Do you have a story about your father? Anything your father did that you remember very well?

**Steven:** No, I can’t say a bad word against him. I had to say he was a good father, brought me up in an estate. That was the room where I grow up. In the meantime my mother pass away. I can’t remember her at all. I was a baby. That was in 1900 here in United States. Mother pass away and he come home and he [inaudible 00:08:52] and I grow up with a stepmother.

**Kate:** Your mother died in Hungary?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What was your mother’s name?

**Steven:** Anna [unclear 00:09:09], I’m going to write that down.

**Kate:** How old were you when your mother died?

**Steven:** That I can’t answer; I can’t remember her at all.

**Kate:** What did your father tell you about your mother? What did he say?

**Steven:** Father come home from the United States and he get married with the stepmother. She was a good stepmother.

**Kate:** Your father was in the United States?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** And your mother was too?

**Steven:** No.

**Kate:** She was back in Hungary?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Your father went to the United States and then he came back and he married?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** He married someone who’s Hungarian?

**Steven:** Yes, from the same village.

**Kate:** What did your family tell you about your mother? Do you know anything about your mother?

**Steven:** Father never mentioned it and I don’t know nothing.

**Kate:** Do you have any pictures?

**Steven:** For my mother?

**Kate:** Yes.

**Steven:** No.

**Kate:** Your stepmother, she raised you?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What was her name?

**Steven:** Elizabeth.

**Kate:** Do you have brothers and sisters?

**Steven:** She had about six children. All die; only one stepsister remain before I left Europe they had that stepsister. I see her in 63 when I was home. She was tickled to death. At least I see life. Mother always was talking about you, or what a good habit boy.

**Kate:** Did your mother’s family live in the same village?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you know your grandparents, your mother’s parents?

**Steven:** I remember grandmother.

**Kate:** Was she your mother’s mother?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What was she like? What was her name?

**Steven:** That I don’t know, I never call her in her name, just ‘grandma’. She was a good grandma because when I start to grow up she always give me little money. When I come out and start to work, I said to grandma, “You got help me; first $50 I will send it to you”.

I sent the money and she turned it in to the church to buy bells because through the war they take bells, the government took it all. We had five of them, left one little one. She turned it in to the priest. The priest said, “I can’t accept it, that’s too much money.” In their money because [inaudible 00:13:10] but one die here in Springdale, Pennsylvania and the other one go home.

He married in United States and older son go home to his family; Joseph. I said, “I owe you money. I’m going to give you the money Uncle Jacob lend me the money and let him take it home and you’re going to buy something proper, not sell land and you got the money”.

He said, “Okay, Steve [inaudible 00:14:14] to reach in the United States. In a year time, I paid my debts out and had $60 in the bank and a tailor- made suit.

**Kate:** You remember your old house where you used to live with your father and stepmother. Do you remember that house very well? Could you tell us a little bit about… first of all, all your brothers and sisters’ names, what are they?

**Steven:** My mother had six children. Four of them die, then Joe my brother, older three year like I, two of us remained from my mother.

**Kate:** Your real mother?

**Steven:** Real mother.

**Kate:** Did your stepmother have children?

**Steven:** Stepmother’s children I remember four of them die and one stepsister remained. She lived to 52 year old. When I was home I meet her. She was like my stepmother with complexion everything. She was tickled to death to see me.

**Kate:** Could you describe your house?

**Steven:** In Europe they built the homes in long way on a property, not across the land, in long way. You had front room of course in Europe you had no front rooms. I’m going to explain it best I know.

Father and mother live in the front, then grandma in the middle. You had like a kitchen, summer kitchen. Where you sleep that’s the cooking at winter time. That heat they had in Europe. The walls is about this thick.

**Kate:** About two feet thick?

**Steven:** Yes. You heat the home up once. Next morning you heat it up again and that’s all.

**Kate:** The heating was done with what, wood?

**Steven:** Wood.

**Kate:** No coal?

**Steven:** No.

**Kate:** So you had wood heating. What about lighting? What lights did you have?

**Steven:** Oil lamp. I’ll be honest about it. Later on petroleum, like gasoline. They had lamps that cost money. You have to buy. Most the time they blend the meat oil. You raise your own and take to the mule, grind and up and make oil, different oil like we had over here all kind of oil; sunflower.

**Kate:** It was sunflower oil that you lit your house with?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What about plumbing?

**Steven:** Plumbing? Forget about plumbing.

**Kate:** Where did you get your water?

**Steven:** You had to make your own well and pull the rope up and down.

**Kate:** Your toilet was outside?

**Steven:** Outside.

**Kate:** Did you keep any animals?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What animals did you have?

**Steven:** Dad had two oxes working. Oxes plough the ground and rake it, take care of the animals and raise extra two younger one and the old one get brought the new one in and sell the old ones, cows.

**Kate:** How many cows did you have?

**Steven:** Milking cows. If the cow get old, if they had a calf, we keep it and raise it up and sell that old one and bring the new one.

**Kate:** What other animals besides the cows and oxen?

**Steven:** Pigs, chicken, geese.

**Kate:** Where did you put those animals? Where were they?

**Steven:** They would keep the ox in the upstairs, make landing there. The chickens go upstairs and underneath the horse.

**Kate:** They were in a separate building?

**Steven:** Yes, of the floor. The second floor is the floor barn and chicken you could throw things inside and some of the chicken fly up and rest themselves.

**Kate:** And dogs and cats?

**Steven:** We had a dog; lot of people had dogs in Europe. It’s protection. Most people had a dog because you never know when somebody come in to steal or do something wrong; the dog make a noise. They train them. The dog know where you sleeping and he jump up to the window when strange people come in. He no let them in by the gate. One of the two barking and some of them bite. You have to be careful.

That had a little one, even as big like that and find here rats and he used to jump up on the window when dad was sleeping and my stepmother and they’d come out and look around and the dog take them what was amiss on the property. Our dogs were trained.

**Kate:** What about horses? Did you have horses?

**Steven:** My uncle had horses. When I grow up I was… he was a lot younger, the baby of the family. Seven brothers, all seven was living. Three of them stay where I born, in that village. They get married in the neighbor village. Dad and other two brother; one had horses and one was a brick-layer and owned couple acre land and make a living through that brick layering and couple acre land. He had four children.

When I come out and I was here two year I bring my cousin out. He get married before that time. He had seven children, his wife. Anna was a hard worker. He always looked the easy way out and I jump up in the job. I never was afraid to work.

**Kate:** We go back to your house a little bit. Who lived in your house then?

**Steven:** Mother and father in the front room and between you had a summer kitchen. The back part of the house was my grandma, then a building you go in [unclear 00:24:44] and up on the floor.

**Kate:** Bedrooms?

**Steven:** No, just one storey house. The top where you had [00:25:01], you put it on the second floor when you had wheat, rye, corn, beans. The chimney had a door and you kill some hawks and smoke it then you hang the meat up in the chimney, like a little room. Nothing can go to it because the wire above the chimney all covered up. You have to have the storey to [unclear 00:25:55] the summer. You never had no overeat meat because twice you got meat; on Sunday and on Thursday.

**Kate:** Why Sunday and Thursday?

**Steven:** Because they can’t afford more.

**Kate:** I know but why those two days? Why not Monday and Wednesday? Why Sunday and Thursday?

**Steven:** They had a habit, middle delicacy; twice you had meat, pork and chicken. You sell the calf. Nothing go wrong, the people grow up with that system and you have to watch everything. Nothing spoil, nothing throw it away like here in the United States. I told that and the owner throw me in a jail. Five cops questioned me back and forth.

**Kate:** When did five cops question you?

**Steven:** When I was in Europe in 1963. They wanted to know- first thing they asked me why United States people hogged on and [unclear 00:27:33] and die. There was because we no had enough to eat. That’s the reason people die like flies in the United States. I said I don’t want to get in trouble explain it. I said not because we no have enough to eat, we overeat in the United States.

Day in day out American people they take to me [unclear 00:28:22] they don’t know. They no get used to it like in Europe they make from the flour. Noodles unlike here, lot of people don’t even know what noodle is, and the big onions. I still like onions especially in the summer.

**Kate:** We go back to your house; so far you’ve told me you had your mother, your father, your grandmother, where are the kids in this back in Hungary? How many children were living in that house?

**Steven:** I was alone. My brother come in the United States and Anne take care of him. When he was old enough then he start to work.

**Kate:** When you were little, your brother lived in the house, didn’t he?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Who else lived? You and your brother and any other children?

**Steven:** No, no children. Stepmother and father and grandma. The buildings in long way like I said. They call it an attic. You carry your crop up, whatever you had from the farm, and dump it on the second floor.

**Kate:** What about the furniture? Do you remember the furniture of your house?

**Steven:** Yes, forget about it.

**Kate:** Was it home made? Did you make your own furniture or did you buy it?

**Steven:** Buy it. People get trained to make furniture then you ordered what kind you want hard wood or the soft.

**Kate:** Why do I have to forget about your furniture?

**Steven:** In Europe, farm places, like when I come out in this country, we had no rag on the floor in 1920. The outside toilet was here too when I come out, a lot of places.

**Kate:** You mean here in the United States they had outside toilets?

**Steven:** Yes. We had no front room, we had no that large [inaudible 00:31:18] since I’m here. The United States [unclear 00:31:29] the working class people. Dad used to say, “You know how much I make an hour? 10 cents or 9 cents an hour.” I start to work at 36 cents an hour.

Year pass by and the union come in and when the union come in, more money you had only if you take care of it like I did in [unclear 00:32:07]. All three go to learn in college, two teachers and one was doing business administration in Parker Electric. He was superintendent, all three boys.

**Kate:** We’re still back in Hungary yet, but was there anyone in your family you were real close to? Who was the closest person to you in your family?

**Steven:** Father. I can’t say mom because I was a baby. I don’t remember her at all. She was a blonde. I was a blonde too, real blonde. Now I get white.

**Kate:** What about religious life at home?

**Steven:** Hard work; when you’re about eight, nine years old they take you out on a farm. You work like a grow up. You no complain. They can’t understand to complain there; you’re young. You sleep. Tomorrow you’re fresh like a daisy. That’s true when you’re young. No matter how hard you work so long they no take you out on a farm, you take care of the chicken and goose and whatever you have. You feed them, give them water.

They re-model it when I go home where I born and raise, they overhang like a pouch along the houses along the outside wall in one room or in another room, on the stable on the end. I grow up. I was 10 year old, put me in a stable to sleep.

In the winter time it was good because the animals they are nice and warm. You no smell nothing. You get used to it. If American children are put in a plane, I say this, if American children go home at good education for them and look around how the people struggle with daily life.

In Europe never find piece of bread on the floor. If you do that when you’re small, they tell you, “I no want to see that no more.” If you do that, that’s a sin and you grow up with that.

**Kate:** What was mealtime like? How many meals a day did you eat together? How did you eat your meal?

**Steven:** In morning the most people; father and son, mother and daughter, grow up daughter 13, 14 year. She worked like a grow up.

**Kate:** Whose daughter?

**Steven:** The family’s daughter.

**Kate:** You didn’t have a daughter in your family, no. Did you eat breakfast with your family?

**Steven:** Yes. Lot of time we had before you go out on the farm, especially when daddy when I grow up he was 52 year old. In Europe the people no live to 90. If a person, very small person but majority of the people die out at 60 and the 60 the old man.

Through the summer you always on the sun. You go early in the morning, sun the earlier it break. You make sure you’re on a farm on your own start to work. When the sun go down, so long you are able to see, you work. The sun go down, start get dark then you go home. Mother go before you go home, prepare the meal.

**Kate:** What was meal like?

**Steven:** Noodles and milk; all kinds of noodles. They roll the dough with their hand and sometimes they grind the dough up then they cut it like over here in a stove. On the bigger where you fry on a pan to about an inch wide and you cook it, drain the water off, and the water drained off and they dump it in a frying pan. Put some oil; most people cook with oil. It was a lot. Then you prepare it, and it’s ready you ate the supper.

Little soup, all kinds of soup in Europe. They make their own bread. The loaf is about this round and five, six loaves. You had your [unclear 00:39:52] bread. That time I used to have toast. It was my favorite. Dad used to say how big the loaf was I carried around, then cut into half, then got a plate on a stove. They build that part on a brick and on top they had two plates with the fire burning the meat.

They used to put bread on and then the toast ready, then get the butter and garlic. In Europe people like putting garlic, rub the garlic on the bread, put the butter on. I still love it; I no deny that.

In United States it said you stink. I’ll be honest about it, lot of time I go out to work, “Steve, why you eat garlic? You smell.” Never mind, it’s healthy for me. The doctor even tell you more garlic you eat, better you feel. And onions; you grow up on onions and bread in Europe. You can pick this or that, what they give you. You eat it or else they take it away, the next day you have to eat it.

**Kate:** What about your church life there? Did you go to church as a kid?

**Steven:** Yes. That’s rule and regulation when I grow up before I come out. If you no go in church, no dinner, no supper either. That’s the rule.

**Kate:** Dinner was served when?

**Steven:** Dinner, 12 o’clock, after the church.

**Kate:** And supper?

**Steven:** Five o’clock.

**Kate:** Dinner was after church?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What church did you go to?

**Steven:** Roman Catholic.

**Kate:** Where was that church in relation to your house?

**Steven:** About five or the sixth block.

**Kate:** So you walked to church?

**Steven:** Yes, no automobile. The wheel bar is your automobile.

**Kate:** How did you practise religion in your home? How often did you go to church?

**Steven:** Every Sunday and every Saturday. When I grow up we used to work half a day and go home, sit the yard, take everything you know of.

**Kate:** That’s on Saturday?

**Steven:** Saturday afternoon.

**Kate:** Then you went to church on Saturday?

**Steven:** Saturday evening mass, or the Sunday, one of the two. You had boots, you shine your boots, clean it up, good shape. I’m not ashamed to explain to you. American people born need to go [unclear 00:44:25]. I used to tell my boys, “Get used to it. I grow up eating corn bread.” Out of corn they make flour and make bread; the people, you had poor people and wealthy people”.

Where I born, some of them own 36 acre land, got a doctor in the family or a lawyer, can support. The lower class people like dad 12 acre and they make a good living out of 12 acre; no go hungry. I was husky, 18 year old like now except I might just drop.

**Kate:** Did you learn prayers? Evening prayers? Did you say your prayers at night?

**Steven:** In the night we so long you’re young and single, the boys get together and the girls get together in the winter time they make thread, busy. Everyday had different places and the boys, almost the same age like the girls, have a good time; kid around with each other.

**Kate:** What was your biggest celebration? The biggest celebrations of the year that you had, what holidays did you practice?

**Steven:** Easter; every Easter come along, the young single people they had a dance; three day dance. Just go home to sleep, next day you go in a dancehall. Nobody teached you how to dance; you have to learn by yourself. A lot of religious, I was a good dancer; me and my girl. She was a good dancer too.

I learn by myself. We saw the dance song and I get the broom, I break myself with the broom. When I grow up we make a bet, 10 of us, we’re going to dance. My feet are always move around and I said, “Pass me the broom.” I start to dance with the broom. Dance floor they were surprised, especially the single girls. “Look! Stocz, how he dance”.

I like to have a dance, next dance so I was dashful. I hate myself when I was young. I never look in a person’s face; how dashful I was, especially the girls. I was shy. Even when I come out in United States I was shy.

When I get married and I limber up. In my old days boys kid me lot of time that I don’t know how to do it; you go too far. I like to kid around and the older I get, the more I kid around with the people who I know.

**Kate:** You went to school?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What kind of school life?

**Steven:** I flunked twice and stopped with that. Dad no like it, the brother in sixth grade he climbed to the high school in the United States. When you go through sixth grade school, the government rip out the German language out of Hungary. If you go to the sixth grade, you had two- day afternoon write and speak German. I don’t read in German so I left out from there. I can’t read and write in Germany just I speak the language, mother language.

I get help from my aunt Mary in New Jersey and I visit her, I start to talk in Hungarian. She said, “Steve, why don’t you talk in your mother language? Don’t you be ashamed?” I said, “Aunt Mary I have nobody to talk in German, I have to learn now in America.” I said, “I’m sorry I understand German, just the answer come out no more right; I have to think how you’re going to pronounce it”.

She was a good aunt so long she was home she had the second boy is my age. The first boy was my brother’s age. When we start to grow up you know how the religious is, closed to get it, and she always take us in like her own. Feed us when we’re hungry, she said to her own children, “You’ll get later on, Joe and Steve is here”. They feed us before their own children.

That was mother’s sister. I remember that when they come out and the boys were young, they put them in school and they read and write in American, they graduate from school. They all passed away; Aunt Mary and her husband and the children.

**Kate:** Back to you, you said you flunked twice, what does that mean? How far did you go in school?

**Steven:** Fourth grade.

**Kate:** The school you went to?

**Steven:** In Hungary.

**Kate:** Why don’t you describe that school for me?

**Steven:** The school is closed [unclear 00:53:29]. Four street face the church; the church is in the middle of street and fence around; big, beautiful church. I never was in United States a bigger church like we had here except in New York, cathedral. That one beat the house. The new [unclear 00:54:09] influencing what I was around in United States. I never find that kind of bigger church like we had; all small.

**Kate:** After the fourth grade what did you do? When you went up to fourth grade, after that where did you go?

**Steven:** Then I start farming.

**Kate:** You were how old then?

**Steven:** In Europe when you are the school, six year school, 12 year you’re grown up person. Take you out, and all kinds of jobs you have to do. Harder you work, bigger you get. Your body get used to it. First you get tired then you get used to it.

**Kate:** Let’s talk about your coming to the States. How did you decide to come to the United States?

**Steven:** My brother he come before the First World War broke out. He was about 12 year old and dad he was in 1900, when I born, in United States. He want to talk me out. “Steve stay home, you take the properties over and you give me so much grain to a year to make [unclear 00:56:04]. In Europe that’s another system like over here.

Over here when they grow up you stand on your two feet. In Europe, dad owned 12 acre land and home, barns, you take over and pay so much living [unclear 00:56:35] per year, you support your parents. They die out automatically the property come to you. I still own six acre land because…

**Kate:** You still own six acre land in Hungary right now?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You shared with your brother?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Who lives there now?

**Steven:** Brother pass away, 56 year old, he pass away, and my sister-in-law pass away. They had five children; two of them in Cleveland and three of them here in Warren.

**Kate:** That brother is an older brother?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Your brother was here?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** How did you get here? How? Why?

**Steven:** Because I want to make a better living like I had in Europe. I promise dad I come out 10 years, stay single, and 10 year if the government no change, I come home and buy more land to it, own 36 acre land and more. He’s a big shot like over here in [unclear 00:58:33].

After list the property they bring profit end of the year, end of summer if you hold back you sell wheat, you sell corn, you sell rye, whatever you have.

**Kate:** Your original plan was to come into this country for 10 years, not marry, and go back home?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Who did you promise not to marry? Your father?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Whose idea was this, your idea or your father’s?

**Steven:** Mine.

**Kate:** You really wanted to come here, make your fortune, go back?

**Steven:** That’s right, I no deny that because I put this way, I love the United States. It’s the best plan on the real if you take care of it. You work yourself up and respect everybody and get along. Thank God if I lived a thousand year in Europe, I never can accomplish what I accomplished in United States.

**Kate:** Who paid for you coming here? You mentioned earlier.

**Steven:** I borrowed the money.

**Kate:** From whom did you borrow the money?

**Steven:** From my uncles. They was here.

**Kate:** How much did you have to get to come here?

**Steven:** $550 cost me to reach here.

**Kate:** In 1920? $550, why was it so expensive?

**Steven:** It’s not so easy in Europe. You make the passport. Everybody wants some under the counter. That’s the reason it cost me $550.

When I reach here the $50 I had. You have to have it because that’s the rule and regulation. When you eat the $50 up, you have to have a job and make butter and bread yourself.

**Kate:** $550 in 1920 was a lot of money. You borrowed this from your uncles?

**Steven:** The debts I borrowed the money the uncle go home while he put up the money I pay back in American money.

**Kate:** And you had $50 extra? We’re going to take a little break here to switch tape. We’re back to you borrowing money from your uncles. It was your idea to leave. You had the idea to come to the States?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** How did your brother fit into this? How did your brother help you in any way?

**Steven:** When I come out he support me about two weeks or three then I get a job.

**Kate:** You had his contact here?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Let’s go back to Hungary now. When you decided you had this idea, what did you have to do to prepare yourself to come? Do you remember what you did? What you packed? What you had to keep behind?

**Steven:** Dad gave me an idea. I see the writing on the wall; no future. He’s home. I like to go to my brothers in the United States and I never was afraid when we were kids. When I mentioned it, “Dad I want to go to my brother in United States.” “Sit down, son. I’m going to explain it to you. Don’t think for a second they had rake, about six foot wide in Europe. Don’t think you’re going to hold that rake in your hand and rake the dollars to get. You have to work for it first”.

Every day is pay day in his days, in 1900, 9 to 10 cents an hour so it’s hard work. Every day you never know tomorrow you got a job whether or not the foreman come out and grab your arm in a [unclear 01:04:37], pick how many he need and give them a job and the rest an hour job.” He said, “You no allowed to hit a child. If you do, they throw you into jail.”

**Kate:** Who told you this?

**Steven:** My father.

**Kate:** If you hit a child you go to jail.

**Steven:** Yes. He said it’s a hard life; it’s not so easy like you think. I said, “Dad, you never complain. I’m a hard worker, I’m a farmer. What able to do I do it. You know me.” “Yes,” he said, “You’re right in that, and keep it up. If you reach there take care of your own job.” That’s 1900 long time the United States modernized. More and more jobs and re-model things. More wages and so forth. When I come out I started with 36 cents an hour and pay the $550 out and had a tailor-made suit, and had $60 in the bank.

**Kate:** First year?

**Steven:** In a year, first year.

**Kate:** What happened after that? You sat down, you spoke with your father and then you had to prepare to go to the States. Once you got the money from your uncles what did you do? What did you pack? What did you take with you when you came?

**Steven:** From Europe? A bag, the trunk fall apart; paper trunk. I buy a little bag, put my little ownings in.

**Kate:** Like what? What did you take?

**Steven:** Shirt, pants, socks, because I tapped the socks out cut from the wear out shirt, and you had cloth on your feet, and boots. Boots fall apart and before I go on a ship I bought shoes in Europe. I come with the shoes and pants and I never forget it either… Dad cut a piece of bacon and smoked sausage. “If you reach out, give it your brother if you can”. Never can tell how you’ll get hungry so I keep my word I said, “Don’t worry dad, I keep it.” That was from Europe.

**Kate:** Did you have anything else special? Did you bring anything, pictures?

**Steven:** No. First when I come out I had my greenhorn picture. I know I got it; where I keep it that I don’t know, in the trunk or...

**Kate:** What picture was that?

**Steven:** First when I come establish myself in United States and greenhorn. Put it that way because it’s hard to pick the language up.

**Kate:** Did anybody call you a greenhorn?

**Steven:** Yes. Some guy called me different name and I go home I ask my brother about that what mean. I know I [unclear 01:10:11] and he explained it to me. Next day I go out to work again, he called me again. I growl like a tiger. Good thing I catch up with him. I catch up. I grab him and throw him between the bunch of iron.

He run up in the superintendent’s office, I can’t talk in English. Hungarian was good enough to repeat his voice in English. He called me; I never called anybody that name, dirty name. Superintendent look at me, the fellow explained what name he called me, and superintendent told him, “You go home, after three months I call you back if we need you. You’ll go back to work”.

**Kate:** This is to the fellow who called you the name?

**Steven:** The fellow who called me the bad name.

**Kate:** Was let go?

**Steven:** Yes, and I remained here. I worked here about 14 year with the company.

**Kate:** Which company was that?

**Steven:** West Lynchburg merged with [unclear 01:11:59].

**Kate:** What kind of company was that?

**Steven:** Steel mill.

**Kate:** We’re going to back just a bit. We’ve gotten to the point where you have your bags packed. Did anyone see you off? Did they have a party for you?

**Steven:** No, before I left village in Europe, you grow up to get it and last evening you spent together and wish all kind of luck and I hope you can go out. I brought Romanian money; I don’t know how many hundred dollars, in Romanian. I can’t use it. Even the bank no want it, so I burn it.

**Kate:** You burnt the money?

**Steven:** Yes, Romanian money. I can’t use it; I can’t spend it, why I keep it? I don’t want to send it home, costs money to send it home.

**Kate:** Where did you burn that? When you were in the States?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Let’s go back to this night before you left.

**Steven:** We had a good party.

**Kate:** You had a party?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** In your town?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** How did your father and stepmother react when you left?

**Steven:** Dad no like it and stepmother she no like Anne. She was a good stepmother and I can’t say a bad word against her. She was a nice human person. I grow up under her; I don’t know nothing of my own mother.

Dad was strict like I was with my boys. I no repeated either; you have to do this or do that. That’s that, and thanks God they grow up and listen to me. Too bad I lost older son. He was good-hearted. The second one take after me, quick and outrageous. I no take no bullshit even when I can’t talk.

**Kate:** How did you lose your first son?

**Steven:** Johnnie Junior, Steve, Frank, Joseph.

**Kate:** The first son died.

**Steven:** Yes. His wife, they have a property on [unclear 01:15:32]. Lot of people go to the [unclear 01:15:35] airport on that road. They built a beautiful home. I know one if you’re not [unclear 01:15:46] with the son when he build it in 66. I was retired already. I said, “Son, that mansion’s going to eat you up.” He said, “Dad, I invest money only if I want to sell I double my money.” I agree because old time never catch up with the new system. I always was afraid I bite more like I able to do.

I was careful all my life so I said, “Son, let’s not fear work in the family. The expense where you pay keep the home up going to eat you up.” “Dad, you’re old-fashioned.” He was in college and he come home from the college he said, “Dad, the professor said in the college now is the time to invest money.” [Unclear 01:17:30] though a new development was 17 or 16, 18 acre land, come home, “Dad I know you have money. How about buy this land then time come and you make money?” I said, “You know son, I’m careful. I no want to sit on two chairs. I get burned the first time. I had a very new house in Pennsylvania and depreciate and I no was able to pay the tax”.

Pennsylvania had high taxes. I used to pay so long I was able. Over $100 tax every six months. The son born in 26, the other one in 29, and in 33, three sons. The first was a girl, God took her. She came out and in that they pulled her away to doctor.

When I think about that I still see them, her little shoulder break here. I don’t even like to talk about that because the girl come first and the three boys almost pass away too with their first baby.

**Kate:** Your wife?

**Steven:** She had a hard time; two doctor was taking care of her. With the boys she was out like fish in a pond, no trouble at all. The second one, we call up the doctor, come on out she in labor. Before the doctor reached over the house she had the baby; no trouble at all.

**Kate:** Who delivered that baby?

**Steven:** The doctor. He was visit already before the doctor arrived and cleaned the baby up, take care of my wife.

**Kate:** We should go back to coming here to the States because I need to know what you remember about that voyage, what port you took off from. When you were leaving for America what port did you come through?

**Steven:** West Germany to England, and from England, big boat. The boat’s name, White Star.

**Kate:** Which port in West Germany was it?

**Steven:** I can’t tell you now. I remember they had little houses there and field. From there we go in a small ship in England.

**Kate:** Where in England were you? What port?

**Steven:** That I can’t remember.

**Kate:** Southampton?

**Steven:** I can’t remember. I know it’s a city on big buildings. I know I had a bleeding nose and I’ll never forget it either. I lay on the table and hang my head down. I was afraid somebody catch me and ship me back. Before I leave there, I get some paper and write the thing and tell them. What port? I know it was a big one. When we get on the ship, the fifth evening we see the light, New York, light all over. They no let us in. They keep us on the ship three days.

**Kate:** No wait. Let’s go back just a little bit. I need some more information about this. How did you get from home to West Germany?

**Steven:** With a train.

**Kate:** How did you get to the train?

**Steven:** Walk.

**Kate:** You walked to the train, and you took a train to West Germany?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** On the boat in England…

**Steven:** From Germany small boat took us in England.

**Kate:** How long did that take?

**Steven:** About a night and a day.

**Kate:** Who was on that boat? Were there other Hungarians? Who was on the boat from Germany to England?

**Steven:** We was five of us from the same village. Aunt Mary, a husband and wife, and a baby… six of us, and a lady and I and another one he get shipped back. They no let him in.

**Kate:** Why?

**Steven:** In [unclear 01:25:13] you have to go through lot of doctors.

**Kate:** What’s [unclear 01:25:22]? What is this?

**Steven:** Before you board, there they keep you for three day then you go through physical.

**Kate:** So you had your physical examination before you got to the States?

**Steven:** On a ship, then when you get off from the ship you go again at the United States and to Europe, then you go channel and everybody have to go through that.

**Kate:** Six of you came from the same village?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** One was sent back for medical reasons?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** From Germany?

**Steven:** No, from the port.

**Kate:** What exactly before you came did you know about the United States? What did you know about America?

**Steven:** That my brother wrote me, “If you can come on out you had a better future in your life than stay in Europe.”

**Kate:** What else did you know?

**Steven:** Not much. We study that in school and so long you work here in school, America is many factories for business so I said to myself nothing to lose, everything to gain. At 16 year old I was like I am today, just I no had no belly. I never was afraid to work.

Like a greenhorn you do more for work like you should because you’re afraid you’ll get laid off and you want to keep your job. In a way to speak you can’t answer back, they show you what to do. Other people shall break you in work. You’re like a lamb; you do what they tell you to do to keep your job.

The foreign people build United States up like it is today. The younger generation won’t admit it. Lot of time it’s on the news. The foreign people from all over the world come here and build United States up like it is. The second generation, this generation, no believe it. My kind of work, broken English, are you hunky?

**Kate:** Did people call you hunky?

**Steven:** In kidding way.

**Kate:** Not meanly?

**Steven:** No. They said, “You hunky, why don’t you learn how to talk in English?” I said, “Listen here, I bring money in this country. What you bring when you born? I’m a better American like you do. I never was in cheer leader. Don’t call me hunky.” And I protect myself; I was able to protect myself.

The foreman said, “You learn fast”, I said, “That’s the truth. I have to have $50 to show before I step American soil and you guys born here. I bring money in this country”. They no like it and that’s the truth. If you think through your life, people born here in United States bring nothing; they’re born here. I was a farmer and I had to have $50 to bring to this country. In other words they no let me in. That’s the rule.

**Kate:** When you were back on that boat, you said they gave medical examinations on that boat between Germany and England. One person was sent back. Why?

**Steven:** That I can’t answer. I’m not a doctor.

**Kate:** Did they tell him or her? Was it a woman or a man?

**Steven:** We never find out other five people were come. When the [unclear 01:32:03] the people, the who no pass, they not let them to the other people. They put them in a separate room for rejects and you never see him no more. You have no more chance to ask why. In America you can’t talk. They open a book every people in the room where you have to read. If you can’t read, you’re out of luck, didn’t let you in.

**Kate:** On this boat, what examination did they give you before you got to England?

**Steven:** They look you all over, three doctor, specialists. If you had disease you no have no chance.

**Kate:** What disease for example? What were the common things?

**Steven:** God know what they were looking for.

**Kate:** Okay. So you got to England?

**Steven:** Yes, and when you get off from the ship you go to the same channel and they ask you, “You like the girls? You was meeting the girls?”

**Kate:** They asked you what?

**Steven:** Single, whether you was meeting a girl, whether you love girls. The doctor ask, you have to answer yes or no. [unclear 01:34:05] didn’t know either way who was meeting a girl and who knows meeting a girl. Doctor asked about education, They look you all over, even look in your bottom with glasses.

**Kate:** There’s one thing I haven’t asked you yet and I’m supposed to ask you and that is, when you got from Hungary to Germany, did you have to wait overnight?

**Steven:** Yes. I spend and if I no sneak away Romania and they grab me and send me in army again. I sneak out from father’s village and hide in Germany eight weeks.

**Kate:** You went from Hungary. You said six people went from your village. You all met in Germany. But you had been in Germany eight weeks, with whom?

**Steven:** We had some barracks. Through the war they use soldiers slept there include in price. They say you no have to pay no more because…

**Kate:** Food was given to you?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You had been in the army once. You had to go to Germany because you had to sneak away because you knew they were going to put you back in the army?

**Steven:** Yes, I know.

**Kate:** So you arranged quickly to leave to Germany?

**Steven:** That’s right. They hunted me when I [unclear 01:36:13] he ask father where is the son? “I don’t know, he took off, didn’t say nothing”. Of course he lied to him.

**Kate:** How did you get your papers then?

**Steven:** I had the paper in my passport.

**Kate:** You didn’t have to apply for permission?

**Steven:** I supply it took me six months then I get a visa.

**Kate:** To the States?

**Steven:** Yes. When I got the visa then I sneak out.

**Kate:** Okay. So as long as you got to Germany it was okay. What’s the trip like from Germany to England?

**Steven:** I was in Germany six week all of us.

**Kate:** What was that like?

**Steven:** After six weeks they put us on a small ship and sent that ship in England, big port. From England, we go on the White Star ship, big ship, and I climb on the first class, second class, I was on third class on the bottom. I always was on the ship. I like to see how the ship cut the water in two. I was fascinated. The ship wanted to give me a job. They always find me late evening and early morning. It was fascinating. I never see a ship in Europe.

**Kate:** In this six to eight week, however long you were in Germany in this big barracks, that was arranged by whom? Who arranged that? You just showed up and stayed?

**Steven:** When you supply you pay in one lump, the cost. It’s a cooperation who take responsibility. You get here and you have to pay so much money and the cooperation write everything.

**Kate:** Why two months? Six weeks, why two months, why not three weeks?

**Steven:** That I can’t answer.

**Kate:** Who was in that barracks with you? Who did you share space with?

**Steven:** People who want to come in United States.

**Kate:** They had to wait that long too?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What did you do for two months?

**Steven:** We was lucky. When we arrive in the United States the other ship, he was before us, we pull later in and they took our ship before theirs and I was surprised we spent three days on a ship. The ship pull in early. They make the trip five day.

**Kate:** You never went through Canada, you came straight. Did you go through Nova Scotia?

**Steven:** Europe had the most people had to go through the same channel, that’s Staten Island. They had a big building there, and doctors.

**Kate:** Ellis Island.

**Steven:** Professional people.

**Kate:** You’re on the boat. Did you spend time on the boat with the other people from your village?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You travelled together?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You were in third class?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** With whom were you with in that cabin?

**Steven:** Everyone had a different cabin. They build if you had two people, if you have families, three, four bed in the cabin, and they had single, if you’re single people. They put you in a cabin; every cabin has a number.

**Kate:** You were in what type of cabin?

**Steven:** Good, nice one.

**Kate:** By yourself?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What was the food condition? Did you eat with your people food?

**Steven:** Believe me I can’t think enough. They serve buns, white bread. I grab them with both hands not with one hand; the meat, excellent. In the morning coffee, donuts, buns, whatever your heart desired. Europe people never eat that good. Through the five day we live like a king.

**Kate:** What about the voyage? What type of water, was it smooth, rough?

**Steven:** I can say smooth, and far away from the ship you see on the water, animals jump up like fish on the water; animals in the ocean you see it. Five days that was enough. We come in five days and we was here.

**Kate:** When did the ship depart? What date from England?

**Steven:** On the ship we have to wait three day. After three day you go to examination and when they finish with examination, lot of people there, they put you in a big room and everybody be bench know which way the bench to get it. You go in Pennsylvania, you go someplace else, a group here a group there, all in all direction and you wait for your train. You see where you come out with five people.

One lady she was here in United States and she come home for a visit. If she love it then the husband go home too. She no love Europe, she come back the same time when I come. She talked in English, good English and they reject her. She no allowed to be with us. After a day they visit her again, and she pass and she said, “Steve, God knows we’ll see each other or not. Goodbye.” Her husband was on the ship. [Unclear 01:45:34] was his name.

He call me on the little boat and he pulled here and said, “Katie Egerly” was her name, kind of her husband, she was married. “She on the ship?” Three of them, the driver who take care of the boat and another two guy. I said, “Repeat it, what’s the name?” “Egerly, Katie Egerly.” “Yes, she here.” I said, “Stay here I call her up.” And run down to the room then I said, “Katie, your husband is here.”

I see the man in the boat. She asked he had $200 and his hand shake like a leaf, “Katie, Katie, good to see you.” I was single I don’t know marriage life now since you’re married you can think how you want to think so I get excited myself. He dropped a rope and he tied money on a rope and we pull it, pull the rope up and get the money.

**Kate:** What did you need the money for?

**Steven:** Five of us I had $50 and $25 you have to have with you to write in the [unclear 01:47:54] and the married couple with the child, they go in West Virginia. They no receive no money on their clothes on who should help so he needed two. He borrow some money, he had the family and he split it out for the family and everybody had $25 to show.

**Kate:** The money that you had that you gave away $25 went to whom?

**Steven:** A friend of mine, family. They had one child and wife and husband and he sent $25 back to me when he start working.

**Kate:** This is a Hungarian friend?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Do you remember the date you left England? What date? You said it took five days. You came three days early so what was the date that was in England?

**Steven:** Could be end of April.

**Kate:** End of April what year, 1920?

**Steven:** 1920.

**Kate:** Can you describe the dining hall? You said you liked the food, you enjoyed the food but the dining hall that you were in, was it crowded?

**Steven:** Clean like a pin. Fruit, I’ll never forget it so long I live, excellent. Napkins like when you go in a restaurant, ship the same way. We had so much fruit here. It’s a little bit sour, green. I eat that like sugar, bread buns.

**Kate:** Do you remember the atmosphere of eating there? Some of the people were poor. The people who were eating quite frantically, do you remember any of that?

**Steven:** Yes. A lot of puke too; a lot of people get sick.

**Kate:** Because they ate so much?

**Steven:** No, they throw up and wobble around.

**Kate:** It was a smooth voyage though. Did you get sick during the voyage? Did any of the people from your village get sick?

**Steven:** Yes, people and other people in the hall where you go down and up the people who worked on the ship they asked to clean it up. One day I get up, no bother me at all. Get up and had breakfast; everybody know what to do, eat breakfast, after breakfast I go up on the deck. I like it. I always watch how the ship cut the water two ways. Last day, my stomach go on a bomb and I almost puked myself. I hold back, I no have no trouble. People hold on to whatever they grab and it’s awful. Some people get awful sick.

**Kate:** Do you remember seeing land for the first time?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What did you see first?

**Steven:** First I see something jump up, about five- six feet over the water go down in the water.

**Kate:** What was it?

**Steven:** That I can’t answer.

**Kate:** Then you saw land?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did the boat react to seeing land?

**Steven:** We pulled in in the evening, we look around then you see New York all full of light. I said to myself, “Thank God we’re here in the United States”. They keep us three days on the ship.

**Kate:** Did you see the Statue of Liberty at any time?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What was the scene in the boat with the Statue of Liberty particularly? Did people gather on deck?

**Steven:** Full of people round there and people walking there right in the evening to early morning, late morning, they take the light out and said that’s the United States. In Europe we no had no electric. Fascinating, everything; I’ll put it that way because you grow up to 20 year old and you never see it in your lifetime, it’s fascinating. You pay attention, what could be. Here and there all over lights, especially in the evening it’s beautiful when you’re far away to see it. Late evening I was on the deck, I can’t look enough. I love it.

**Kate:** Did you speak any English at that time at all?

**Steven:** No, not a word. I’d be honest about it and like I said they’d call me such a name and…

**Kate:** When you got to Ellis Island, what’s your impression of Ellis Island when you first got in? In the big building you talked about, what was your impression about that building? What do you remember?

**Steven:** I thought to myself Dickens built this beautiful building; long and big rooms. I walk around then they had cops walking up and down in the building to watch over the people. Everybody behave themselves, nobody fight each other.

**Kate:** Were you at all frightened about the medical examinations?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Was everybody?

**Steven:** Yes, everybody had to go through that before they put their feet on the ground.

**Kate:** What type of medical examination did you have?

**Steven:** From the top to the bottom.

**Kate:** Your other papers that you had from the other boat, that wasn’t enough?

**Steven:** No, you had a passport and every time you cross they put stamps on it.

**Kate:** But didn’t you have papers from your other medical exam? You had a medical examination once before?

**Steven:** Sure I had. Before I go on this trip I had examination in Europe and when my time to get off on the ship in New York, before they let you off on the ship one by one you have to go through a bunch of doctors in both sides. One look your ears, eyes, everything that you’ve got on your body, birthmarks and so forth. They know everything. Of course it’s in the passport too.

**Kate:** Some people did not get one. The reason I ask you is that some people when they had their examination they went right through. Is it your impression that other people on the boat had the same examination that you did?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You have information they told you?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you hear of anyone besides being turned away?

**Steven:** Like I said that I can’t answer because this lady with this man he no pass the examination. Two ways, one go left and one go right. When you go the right aisle you pass the examination. When they find something wrong you go left, and they send him back in Europe. He reached home and I don’t know to this day what kind of sickness he had. It was doctor, not me.

Not long ago I was taking examination with Dr. Wilson. He went and he sent me to another doctor and stick a pipe down and they want to know I am cured, no had no cancer inside. The boys start to talk, “Take it, take it”, I said, “You’re a doctor?” He said, “I’m grown up. You don’t have to [unclear 02:00:26] me.” Then he said, “Get out of my deck.” Dr. Wilson he’s been around. His [unclear 02:00:37] just go up and down the lab…

**Kate:** Were you detained at all at Ellis Island? Did they keep you there?

**Steven:** No.

**Kate:** When you got to Ellis Island did you stay overnight?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** For how long?

**Steven:** When you go to examination you have to wait for your transport. They transport people to get it. A lot of people go on the same place or the same state.

**Kate:** When you waited for your transport where did you stay?

**Steven:** I wait 16 hour before the time come to take me on a train, put me on a train and Brownsville section it took me off and I have to wait here on a Sunday, never forget, May 5th was on a Sunday. People walk around with nice shirt, like summer and they take me off on the train.

**Kate:** I’m sorry I keep going back because these are details about Ellis Island. The White Star arrived three days earlier, you said, from England.

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You had to stay and wait. Did you have to wait for three days?

**Steven:** Yes, on the ship.

**Kate:** Then once you’d gone through your examination you had 16 hours and you stayed where?

**Steven:** In the building.

**Kate:** From there, you were going where?

**Steven:** On a train.

**Kate:** To?

**Steven:** To the fellow. Not only me, a lot of people come staying there in Pennsylvania.

**Kate:** You’re coming to Pennsylvania where your brother was?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** They transported you to the train, you got on the train, and you came to where in Pennsylvania?

**Steven:** Brownsville section he took me off and I wait there afternoon around three o’clock or 2:30, around there. I can’t remember exactly. The fellow showed me when the train was going to pull in and I was sitting on a bench still close to the big [unclear 02:03:48] train pulling, jump up like a deer running a station. He was busy then I hold his arm, shake his arm, train’s coming, and he dropped the pen, hold me on my arm, and take on the train, put me on the train.

The ticket on my chest tell them, conductor take him off when he Pennsylvania, Lynchburg and conductor take me off and there’s always somebody in the office so give it to this fellow who work in our office and I look around and can’t see nothing else except hills and trees blooming.

I said, “I no see no city but the people here. Where are you?” Go in a depot outside there and you’ll always find some people to kill the time. I saw a lot of people, didn’t understand, they didn’t understand me. Finally I said I talk German, Dutch in Hungarian.

**Kate:** Were they Pennsylvania Dutch?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You’re talking to Amish?

**Steven:** No.

**Kate:** You were going to Lynchburg, Pennsylvania?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What address were you going to? Was that where your brother lived?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What was his address?

**Steven:** Georgetown, they call it Georgetown. Little section of the city, it’s not big; small city. It had three factories in it; US Steel, independent steel company, and [unclear 02:07:00] factory, sell some here in Warren, a Pittsburgh company bought the [unclear 02:07:11] factory and stayed here and nobody worked here.

After US Steel they polished the factory off and make a city park, it’s beautiful now. Not big factory there, just lot of people from the iron they punch on milk cans and all kinds of things.

I used to watch from the sidewalk, hot iron, and you can’t go in. They no let you in there, guard no let you in. Fascinating that I see in my life time such things. I get a job in a [unclear 02:08:27] and I learn the hard way.

**Kate:** When you came, you went to your brother’s house?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Which was in Georgetown?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Do you remember the address of that house? Where did he live? What type of house did he live in?

**Steven:** Frame house; double house.

**Kate:** Did he own that house?

**Steven:** No.

**Kate:** He rented it?

**Steven:** Yes. Doctor owned the house.

**Kate:** How big was that frame house?

**Steven:** Double house.

**Kate:** It was a double house; the doctor lived in part of it?

**Steven:** No, rented.

**Kate:** The whole house was rented?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** How many rooms would you say?

**Steven:** He had three bedrooms, kitchen, front room, that’s all.

**Kate:** How was it lit, the house?

**Steven:** It’s a normal old type of house like all over you see it if you go in a big city, still remain old houses and every year they re-model it and now they make it nicer like our time.

**Kate:** Did it have electricity?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did it have indoor plumbing?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** How was it heated?

**Steven:** Got a coal furnace heated up to the window and hot water tank old-fashion way, and toilet was outside.

**Kate:** The toilet was outside, this is 1920 now. What was your first job then in 1920 when you came here? You said that you paid back everything, you had a suit, and you had $60 in the bank so how did you do that?

**Steven:** I work in a glass factory.

**Kate:** Your first job was a glass factory in Georgetown?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What did you do in that glass factory?

**Steven:** In Pennsylvania the big stores on the front had big glasses we put hang out whatever business they are. They said, “Steve, if we hear a crack, drop everything run away” and big glass crack. I remind I no want you to get hurt. Like a greenhorn I no was afraid when that devil. I’d rather listen.

Happened once, the glass slip, let it fall down and breaks to pieces, clean it up and throw it in the oven and melt it again and roll it out again and that goes in the washroom.

First it goes on a round table then you take care of it, you put [unclear 02:12:39] then you put sand in; sand get mixed up with the polished glass. Then you turn it over, shining, and then it’s ready, take the door from clear head in washroom and wash the glasses with some extra paper, you wash, and put it in a rack.

Before they put it in a rack, extra people cut the glasses, level it out, and curve whatever the order call for and when it’s ready then they put it in a rack, clean, and ship it from there.

**Kate:** Why a glass factory? What did you know about glass when you came here? How come you got a job in the glass factory?

**Steven:** I no see that in Europe and it’s fascinating when you grow up to 19 year, 20 year, you’ve never seen it in your life everything is fascinating.

**Kate:** How did you find out about it? How did you get your first job?

**Steven:** They took me in and showed me and I stop him. “I want to see what’s underneath that”. I spin the table around. That hit me the first time. Nobody help. That’s [unclear 02:14:45] underneath. When we turn the glass over it, the shattered on got a little deal to to stop them and I said to my uncle, “Hey check, what’s spin around underneath, “Don’t you figure it out? Electric machine spin the table.” “Take me down there I want to see it.”

**Kate:** Your uncle worked in that factory?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You had a connection to that job to your uncle?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What responsibility did you have?

**Steven:** He come out in 1910. Only job he had in his life time. He retire and pass away. He never move around. I was a greenhorn in fact I no deny it, I was money- hungry. I was working and find out you had a better chance, I never satisfied with glass factory, I want more money, quit, go in the steel industry.

**Kate:** What were you paid in the glass factory? You must remember; it was your first job. What did they pay you there?

**Steven:** 36 cents an hour.

**Kate:** You worked there how long?

**Steven:** Over a year. I quit and go in steel industry.

**Kate:** In Georgetown, Steel industry where?

**Steven:** Steel factory was in West Lynchburg and the corporate it in other company.

**Kate:** Your plan was to stay here 10 years. How long did you work in that steel factory?

**Steven:** I was working there about 13 to 12 year.

**Kate:** Why didn’t you go back?

**Steven:** Then the Depression broke out. In the meantime I get married.

**Kate:** How did you meet your wife?

**Steven:** That’s a long story. A fellow here, her brother-in-law, his brother married my wife’s sister. In meantime his brother come out from Europe and he start to work in Pennsylvania. He was my helper. I work myself up in a hurry. I want money. I never was afraid of work. My wife get ready to come out in United States.

**Kate:** Where was she from?

**Steven:** From Hungary.

**Kate:** Your wife was Hungarian?

**Steven:** Yes. He quit the job. He know her from Europe. He want to marry her. He said, “I quit the job, Veronica come out and I’m going to marry her.” His mother go all the way to my wife’s village to tell Joe don’t get married with a poor girl. In Europe they look how rich you are.

The most of them get married to another people, they talked both parties together. Your parents picked a bride, richer she is better they like it. That’s the custom in Europe. Of course now nobody own nothing; communist. I hate the communist business, no like it at all. He explained to me when holidays come they used to go to each other’s visit from one village to the other.

**Kate:** What village was your wife from? What was her village?

**Steven:** [unclear 02:21:12], and I’m from [unclear 02:21:20] in my language. The crop grow winter and summer in English, [unclear 02:21:30]. [Unclear 02:21:32] the field, [unclear 02:21:34]; the ground.

**Kate:** What was your wife- to-be’s name?

**Steven:** [unclear 02:21:44], German name.

**Kate:** How do you spell that?

**Steven:** I write it down, I can’t spell American.

**Kate:** What’s her first name, her full Christian name?

**Steven:** I know its Veronica was my wife’s name. The fellow who come out after me, he worked for a while and he quit and go in Chicago. My wife’s sister and brother-in-law was working in East Chicago.

He asked her hand; didn’t know each other and she said, “No, Joe. You know what your mother said to me. I bring the message and give it to you; don’t ever marry a poor girl, marry the rich girl.” In Europe that’s the system. The parents talk, two of them together and I no believe that either.

Good thing I was a grown up with 20 year so nobody had nothing to say. I’m going to marry who I like.

**Kate:** How did you get a hold of your wife?

**Steven:** Joe told me what a nice family they had eight children; nine children born, one die; eight living children. She was the second child in her family. A revolution broke out and they had a 12 acre land. The family is big and you have to cut little by little for everyone a piece.

She wanted to get married. Her parents said that’s time to get married. She was 20 year old when she come out. Veronica said that her parents, “I no going to marry, he’s too poor and I no like him”. So she make her mind up, sister help her, send the money, bring her out and that buddy of mine he explained to me what a nice family she come from.

I just listen and she arrive and she make a photograph and send it and Joe send it to me. I look at it. I’m going to marry you. I tell the foreman I want three months off. [Unclear 02:25:29] Chicago, Illinois. She was working in a factory, cleanser top; she put the cleanser top on.

**Kate:** The cleanser top on the cans?

**Steven:** Yes. In the meantime when I arrive I never see her in my life. I don’t even know the villages, I never heard.

**Kate:** Did she know you were coming?

**Steven:** I never forget when I arrived with a taxi and taxi took me up and she pulled on second floor on the shake the rag on the dust. I look up in the morning before dinner time. I said, “Good morning, finally I arrive.” “Yes, come on in. I’ll be down right way”. So she come down and receive me. Her sister and her husband was working and they come home from work, I was there. I make fun of her and the children.

**Kate:** She was expecting you to come? You wrote to her?

**Steven:** Yes. I was there. Her uncle owned the home and the uncle stay on first floor and my wife’s sister and husband on the second floor. I said, “What are you going to do?” Her uncle, Lawrence was his name, I said, “I pay board if you would accept me.” He said, “Sure, lots of room”. He was a jolly fellow. They no had no children so I stayed there couple days.

Sunday come, that time the country was dry. Brother-in-law he said, “Come on, let’s go in the [unclear 02:29:00]”. I run out in the [unclear 02:29:04]. Sister-in-law come feel her husband. In other words I run home. I never was a heavy-drinker in my life. I can’t find home. Sister-in-law calls her husband and I run out of there and go home with her and I ask her hand.

Veronica said, “I have to ask my sister.” I said, “Listen here, Veronica. I no want to marry your sister, I want you.” She smiled, she said, “You’re right. I give my word and marry you”. [Unclear 02:30:19] is in a hurry and I get laid off. I worked here a couple weeks and I get laid off. I said, “Veronica now I no leave; you’re going to support me. I married you, I’m going to support you and you no allowed to work.”

**Kate:** You said that to her?

**Steven:** Yes. I said I’m a man and I want a family. I love family, all the children. We had four children, one pass away, now the second one [unclear 02:31:24]. We had a beautiful life. 57 year and 3 months I say I was living in heaven. Never had a bad word to each other; honest and shared our life like a married couple should do. We have a beautiful life.

**Kate:** Did you still stay religious? Did you still keep your faith?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** She too?

**Steven:** Yes. She was a choir girl in Europe. She had a beautiful voice. Whatever we was living the neighbors always admired her. Not a son take after mother, all three of them after me and I had a bad voice.

**Kate:** What about you learning English? How did you manage with the language when you came here?

**Steven:** Little by little, what I can’t understand I ask, “Explain it to me.”

**Kate:** Did you have any problems, besides that one, of people making fun of you at all?

**Steven:** Like a greenhorn you no pay no attention; your interest to learn the language. So long I was in Pennsylvania I can pick it up because they had Hungarian stores. The doctors have to learn how to speak in Hungarian, butcher shop, Slovak people, Hungarian people was working in the factory so when I left Lynchburg I come over here, understanding yes but my tongue don’t want to pick it up to answer.

**Kate:** How about your wife? How did she adapt to life here?

**Steven:** When she come out in the United States, her sister put her in school. Nobody play hard, she nobody in United States.

**Kate:** So she learnt English very well?

**Steven:** Yes. She read and write.

**Kate:** Your children, did they learn Hungarian?

**Steven:** Second boy, I lean in a yard and I play violin for the children and I want to teach him how to talk in German. The neighbor was sitting outside on the porch on a swing. Second boy, Steve, repeated and he did like a child, get mad and hit the head and hit me in the head with violin. The neighbor he said, “Looks like the teacher get beat up”.

**Kate:** Did you speak Hungarian to your children? Did you and your wife speak Hungarian?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** To each other?

**Steven:** Yes. Her and I we both talk Hungarian and German. When that happen she always ask me so long as I was in Pennsylvania, that teacher get beat up from the students. He talks so nice in Hungarian and both of them Candy Land and grocery store between the two houses we was living in [unclear 02:36:22].

Neighbor work at Candy Land he said, “Steve, why don’t you…” His wife can have no children. He listen to my girls early in the morning she used to sing church songs and other state songs. She had a beautiful voice. Not one son take after her, they all take after me.

**Kate:** You said you were never frightened to work. What hours did you work most of your life in doing your jobs? Did you work nine to five or more?

**Steven:** When I start to work, 10 and a half hour daylight and 12 and a half hour midnight.

**Kate:** Did you work double shifts?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** How many years did you work double shifts?

**Steven:** Up till NRA come in.

**Kate:** What’s NRA? National Rifle Association?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** Until the National Rifle Association came in you worked double shifts?

**Steven:** Two shifts.

**Kate:** When did you sleep?

**Steven:** Through the daylight. When you’re at work, daylight, then you sleep in the evening.

**Kate:** The second shift or double shift?

**Steven:** No double shift; one shift daylight, the other shift night.

**Kate:** You worked night shift most of your life?

**Steven:** No, one week daylight one week…

**Kate:** You alternated your shifts?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** What were your hours? Did you feel that you worked long hours in the States?

**Steven:** Midnight work 13 hours and daylight work 10 hour.

**Kate:** Your whole life?

**Steven:** No. [Unclear 02:39:04] turn around and cut the 10-hour off and start to work 8- hour.

**Kate:** When was [inaudible 02:39:18]?

**Steven:** That I can’t remember what year start.

**Kate:** About, say a ball park figure.

**Steven:** After Depression I move over here and bigger corporation and full- term work. Daylight, afternoon, all round the clock, so many days off and when you flout, you start daylight, afternoon and midnight five-day.

**Kate:** The reason I ask you this is because do you think, in looking back over your life, that your decision was a good decision to come to the United States?

**Steven:** A better future.

**Kate:** You think your life here is better than it would have been?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kate:** You never ever wanted to go back and buy that land and be the king?

**Steven:** I had enough Europe. I was born there and that’s not nice when a person to run his own land. I respect every land on earth. When I pick up the language I no talk good enough here. Good enough, I get by. I’m happy here. I never can establish that in Europe if I live a thousand year. I accomplish a lot in the United States.

**Kate:** Did you ever see your father again when you left?

**Steven:** No. Father was 52 year old when I left and in 1962 I go home, stepmother pass away, father pass away, only one stepsister was living. She had a daughter when I was home I show her she get married and when I left, the following week she get married. When I left I said, “Sister I can stay. I like to be here.” I had so much days and time run out and a lot meaning in United States so I have to get home where I belong to.

**Kate:** Do you feel also that your wife felt satisfied with her decision to leave Hungary?

**Steven:** My wife’s father… mother pass away with 52 year old. Father was 91 year old and I saw him the first time and the last. I make a phone he always ask me, “Son, how much you make eight hour?” He’d tell me, “You’re doing a good job, send the children in college. I want to know how much you make an hour.”

Don’t ask me such things; I born in Europe and I know how the European people are. I was 20 year old when I left Europe. I said, “If I tell you, you hide in a corner, then you figure it out in your money.” He looked at me, “Son, you read my mind. How you finish… Veronica said that you send all the children to college.” I said, “Yes, I’m willing to work my fingers to bone with God’s help”.

**Kate:** I’d like to thank you on behalf of Ellis Island for granting this interview.

**Steven:** Thanks God, He always help me and the wish come true. I used to say to my girl Veronica I don’t care mom, get used when the children were small called her mom. I said, “I don’t care if I had five penny in my pocket, if the wish come true I’m satisfied. Either one will have to work that hard like I did. I’m happy. The pension, I make a good living, no worries. Once in a while I get blue, you can’t guess God, you believe in it.

**Kate:** We’d like to thank you for very much for granting us this interview and we’ll send you a copy of the interview too.

**Steven:** You’re welcome anytime if I can be helped.

**Kate:** I appreciate it. This is Kate Moore signing off with Steven Stocz in Warren, Ohio, on the 4th of January 1994.